IN THE CLAIMS:

(Canceled) 1.

(Previously presented) A method for manufacturing a semiconductor device 2. comprising the step of:

forming an insulating film comprising silicon nitride over a semiconductor by sputtering in an atmosphere comprising nitrogen at 75 volume % or more.

- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 2 wherein the sputtering 3. is performed by an RF sputtering method.
- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 2 wherein the 4. semiconductor device is incorporated into an active matrix display device.
- (Previously presented) A method for manufacturing a semiconductor device 5. comprising the step of:

forming an insulating film comprising silicon nitride over a semiconductor by sputtering in an atmosphere comprising nitrogen at 75 volume % or more and argon at 25 volume % or less.

- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 5 wherein the sputtering 6. is performed by an RF sputtering method.
- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 5 wherein the 7. semiconductor device is incorporated into an active matrix display device.
- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 5 wherein the atmosphere 8. further comprises a halogen compound gas at 0.2 to 20 volume %.

W707046.1

(Previously presented) A method for manufacturing a semiconductor device 9. comprising the steps of:

forming an insulating film comprising silicon nitride over a semiconductor by sputtering in an atmosphere comprising nitrogen at 75 volume % or more; and

forming an electrode comprising aluminum over the insulating film.

- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9 wherein the sputtering 10. is performed by an RF sputtering method.
- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9 wherein the 11. semiconductor device is incorporated into an active matrix display device.
- (Previously presented) A method for manufacturing a semiconductor device 12. comprising the steps of:

forming an insulating film comprising silicon nitride over a semiconductor by sputtering in an atmosphere comprising nitrogen at 75 volume % or more and argon at 25 volume % or less; and

forming an electrode comprising aluminum over the insulating film.

- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 12 wherein the sputtering 13. is performed by an RF sputtering method.
- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 12 wherein the 14. semiconductor device is incorporated into an active matrix display device.
- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 12 wherein the 15. atmosphere further comprises a halogen compound gas at 0.2 to 20 volume %.
- (Previously presented) A method for manufacturing a semiconductor device 16. comprising the step of:

forming a transistor; and

W707046.1

forming an insulating film comprising silicon nitride over the transistor by sputtering in an atmosphere comprising nitrogen at 75 volume % or more.

- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 16 wherein the sputtering 17. is performed by an RF sputtering method.
- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 16 wherein the 18. semiconductor device is incorporated into an active matrix display device.
- (Previously Presented) A method for manufacturing a semiconductor device 19. comprising the steps of:

forming a transistor; and

forming an insulating film comprising silicon nitride over the transistor by sputtering in an atmosphere comprising nitrogen at 75 volume % or more and argon at 25 volume % or less.

- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 19 wherein the sputtering 20. is performed by an RF sputtering method.
- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 19 wherein the 21. semiconductor device is incorporated into an active matrix display device.
- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 19 wherein the 22. atmosphere further comprises a halogen compound gas at 0.2 to 20 volume %.
- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 8, wherein the halogen 23. compound gas is selected from the group consisting of NF3, N2F4, HF, chloro-fluoro carbon, F2, CCl4, Cl2 and HCl.

W707046.1

- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 15, wherein the halogen 24. compound gas is selected from the group consisting of NF3, N2F4, HF, chloro-fluoro carbon, F2, CCl4, Cl2 and HCl.
- (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the halogen 25. compound gas is selected from the group consisting of NF3, N2F4, HF, chloro-fluoro carbon, F2, CCl4, Cl2 and HCl.
- (New) A method according to claim 2, wherein the sputtering is performed by 26. using a target comprising silicon nitride.
- (New) A method according to claim 5, wherein the sputtering is performed by 27. using a target comprising silicon nitride.
- (New) A method according to claim 9, wherein the sputtering is performed by 28. using a target comprising silicon nitride.
- (New) A method according to claim 12, wherein the sputtering is performed 29. by using a target comprising silicon nitride.
- (New) A method according to claim 16, wherein the sputtering is performed 30. by using a target comprising silicon nitride.
- (New) A method according to claim 19, wherein the sputtering is performed 31. by using a target comprising silicon nitride.